

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the Office Action mailed April 22, 2004, the Examiner rejected claims 1-5, 10-12 and 15-18. The Examiner objected to claims 6-9, 13 and 14 for being dependent upon a rejected base claim, indicating that these objected to claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form and including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. And claim 19 was allowed by the Examiner.

After reviewing the bases for the Examiner's rejections, the Applicants strongly disagree. Nonetheless, in the hope of facilitating allowance of this application, the Applicants have decided to cancel claims 4, 5, 10-12 and 15-17. Furthermore, the Applicants have amended claims 6 and 13 as suggested by the Examiner to address the objections set forth by the Examiner. Therefore, that leaves claims 1-3 and 18 for further discussion in this paper.

Independent claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,795,191 (Preputnick et al.) in view of U.S. Patent 5,865,645 (Embo et al.). Likewise, independent claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Preputnick et al. in view of Embo et al. and U.S. Patent 6,299,484 (Van Woensel).

Both claim 1 and claim 18 require an electrical connector having a plurality of rows with each row having a plurality of ground conductors and signal conductors (claim 1, lines 14-17; claim 18, lines 19-22). Each signal conductor has a contact tail and each ground conductor has at least two contact tails (claim 1, lines 26-27; claim 18, lines 31-32). As the Applicants found during testing of a prototype connector as claimed, the utilization of two ground contact tails for each signal contact tail allowed the connector to achieve the improved electrical characteristic objects of the present invention as set forth in the Background Of The Invention section.

Preputnick et al. discloses an electrical connector assembly which includes a mating connector 80 having a housing 82 with signal contacts 84 and ground blades 86 (see FIG. 1). Even by the Examiner's admission, Preputnick et al. fails to disclose a plurality of rows, where each row has a plurality of signal conductors with each signal conductor having a contact tail and a plurality of ground conductors with each ground conductor having at least two contact tails. (Page 4 and pages 12-13 of the April 22, 2004 Office Action).

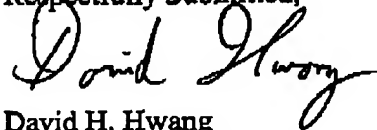
Embo et al. discloses a press-fit plug connector that includes a shielding plate 8, a plastic body 1, two rows of contacts 3, and a molded part 2 (column 2, lines 56-59; FIG. 1). The molded part 2 includes an opening at each end portion for receiving two ground contact plates 10, with each contact plate 10 having a printed circuit board connection clip 21 (column 3, line 37 - column 4, line 2; FIGS. 1 and 2). The printed circuit board connection clips 21 fit within slotted fastening pegs 16 of the molded part 2 before being inserted into a printed circuit board hole 24 (see FIGS. 4 and 5).

Note that the reason why the Applicants of the present invention have utilized the two ground contact tails per signal contact tail does not relate to printed circuit board fastening reasons. Rather, as set forth in the Background Of The Invention section, the reason relates to improved electrical characteristics of the connector (minimal cross-talk, impedance and attenuation mismatch characteristics).

Therefore, it would not have been obvious for a person of ordinary skill in the art to provide the printed circuit board connection clips of Embo et al. to each ground blade contact tail of Preputnick et al. And there is absolutely no teaching or suggestion for such combination in any of the prior art references cited by the Examiner.

In view of the amendments and the remarks/arguments made above, Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case for the pending claims. Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this Amendment, the undersigned attorney for the Applicants respectfully requests a telephone call to discuss the same.

Respectfully Submitted,



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